

# Animals & Hypothermia



Our Alberta temperatures can get pretty crazy!

If we can get frostbite or hyperthermia with all our additional winter clothing, you can guarantee animals can as well.

Here are some basic steps to help you help an animal.

If you suspect your pet has hypothermia, or you find an animal you suspect has hypothermia, this is what to do:

- ✓ **DO** get the animal out of the weather and inside. Warm the animal up slowly.
- ✓ **DO** dry off the animal.
- ✓ **DO** stroke and gently rub the animal to stimulate blood flow.
- ✓ **DO** take the animal to a veterinary clinic as soon as possible.
- ✗ **DO NOT** pull off an animal if it is frozen to the ground! Pour **LUKE WARM** water or liquid around the animal until the pads or body parts release. **Do not use hot liquid!** Think of how it feels when your hands are cold and you put them under hot water – your nerve endings turn to fire. This will also happen to the animal. Dry the animal off gently with a towel or shirt and take it to the nearest veterinary clinic.
- ✗ **DO NOT** feed! In order to help the body survive, the brain will redirect blood flow to the heart, lungs and vital organs and away from things like the digestive system. The animal would not be able to process food or water properly until it warms up. If you feed an animal with when it's body is hypothermic it can be fatal.
- ✗ **DO NOT** submerge in water. Submersing in warm or cold water can shock the animals system and could lead to cardiac issues or organ shutdown. If you warm them up too fast it can be fatal.

Slow and steady is the rule of thumb. A vet can treat the animal for shock and hypothermia using a series of injections and warm IV fluids and an incubator.

Losing ears, tails, toes or a leg is workable. Damaging internal organs is not.

